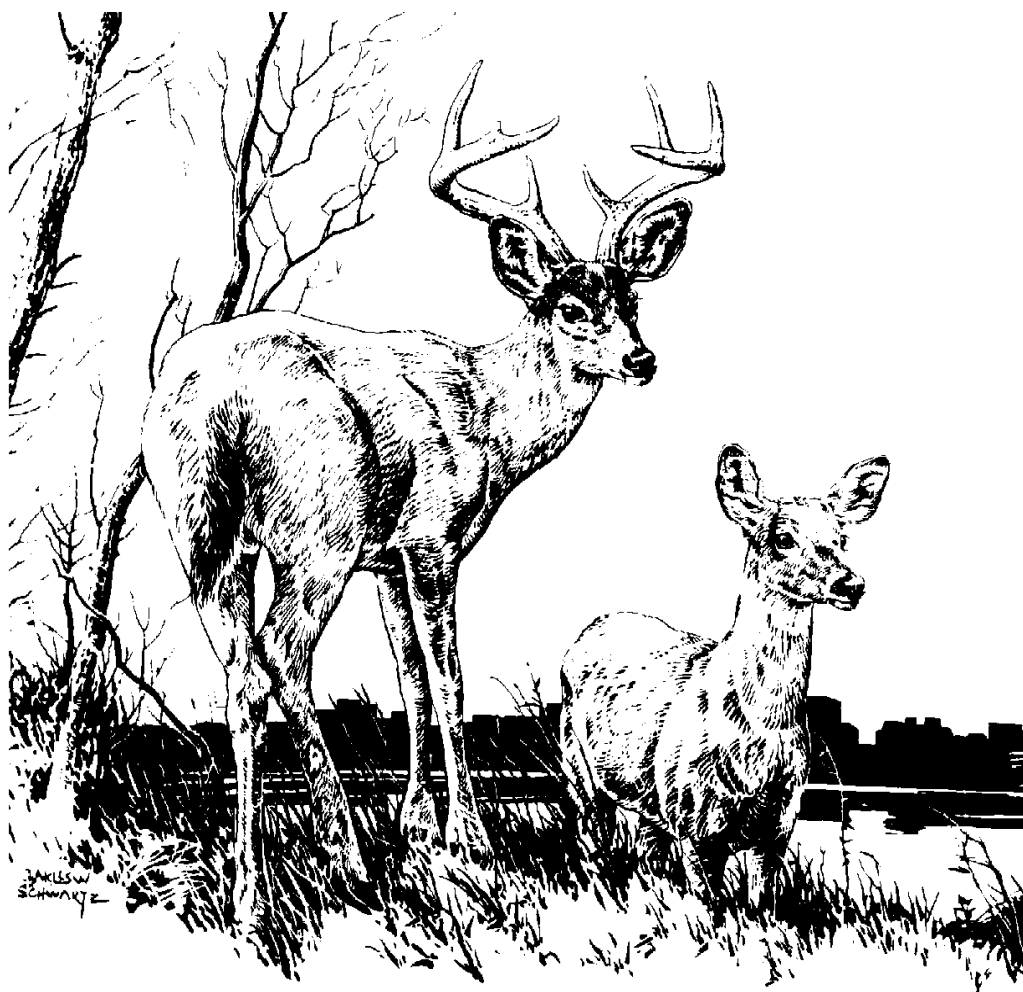


# ***2004 Indiana Deer Season Summary***



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## Season Framework and Regulations

*General.*—The 2004 Indiana deer hunting season was comprised of 4 segments: early archery (1 October-28 November), firearms (13-28 November), muzzleloader (4-19 December), and late archery (4 December-2 January). This was the 11<sup>th</sup> year that the early archery season extended into and throughout the firearm season. This was the 9<sup>th</sup> year that the late archery season extended through the first Sunday in January rather than ending on the last day in December.

This was the 8<sup>th</sup> year that the crossbow was legal for hunting under an archery license by non-handicapped hunters. The crossbow was eligible for use only in the late archery season and only for antlerless deer. Special public hunts were held at Muscatatuck and Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuges, and Naval Support Activity Center-Crane and Camp Atterbury Army National Guard Training Site.

For a 9<sup>th</sup> year, archers could harvest deer in designated urban zones that did not count towards any other statewide bag limit. Each deer required a separate additional archery license. Starting in 2002, the archery season in the urban deer zone opened 2 weeks prior to the opening of the statewide early archery season. Additionally, starting in 2002, archers were allowed to harvest up to 4 extra urban zone deer (4 antlerless or 3 antlerless and 1 antlered) whereas in earlier years only 2 extra deer could be taken which could not include an antlered deer.

The statewide archery bag limit was 2 deer. Hunters could take 1 deer on a regular archery license and an additional deer on an extra archery license. Either archery license could be used to take an either-sex deer, but a total of only one (1) antlered deer could be taken by any hunter during all statewide seasons combined using archery, firearm, or muzzleloader licenses.

The gun bag limit was 1 antlered deer during the firearms season and 1 either-sex deer during the muzzleloader season subject to the total of 1 antlered deer during all combined deer seasons. A single firearms license was required to hunt with any or all shotgun, muzzleloader, or handgun during the firearms season, and a muzzleloader license (separate from the firearms license) was required to hunt during the muzzleloader season. The resident deer license fee was \$24.00 and the nonresident fee was \$120.75. Resident landowners and lessees who hunted on land they own or lease and gained agricultural benefit from were exempt from purchasing deer licenses.

*Antlerless Permits.*—This was the 21<sup>st</sup> year antlerless deer could be taken during the firearms season by use of bonus county antlerless permits in addition to the above bag limits. Initially, the bonus county antlerless permits were limited to a specific quota for each county and were only valid for the specified county. One permit per hunter was available via a drawing. During the first years of the program, the left-over permits were destroyed. The program was liberalized in subsequent years. During the last year of the quota system (1995), individual hunters could pick up multiple left-over permits. Left-over permits were available on a first come basis at one site in each specific county where the permits were valid.

The bonus antlerless program was revised in 1996 so that hunters did not have to apply through a drawing; 2004 was the 9<sup>th</sup> year of this modified antlerless bag limit and permit disbursement system. An unlimited number of permits were available at every deer license vendor statewide, and each permit could be used in any county in the state. Permits were available to both resident and non-resident hunters. Each permit was valid for 1 antlerless deer, and hunters were allowed to take up to 4 antlerless deer statewide. Hunters could not exceed individual county bag limits, which ranged from 0 to 4, and were published in the Hunting and Trapping Guide. Since 1993, the bonus county permits could be used during the muzzleloader and late archery seasons if they were not filled during the firearms season. In 2004, 3 counties had a bag limit of 1 and regulations that restricted the season of use for Bonus Antlerless permits to the last 4 days of the firearms season plus the muzzleloader and late archery seasons. One county had a Bonus Antlerless bag limit of zero (0).

### **Number of Deer Harvested**

A total of 123,058 deer was legally harvested in Indiana during the 2004 season. This harvest was a 15% increase from the 106,986 deer harvested during 2003. Compared to 2003, the antlered buck harvest of 54,768 represented a 10.6% increase from last year, and the antlerless harvest of 68,290 was 18.9% greater than that of 2003 (57,453). Total deer harvest has increased annually since 2000. Approximately 2.1 million deer have been legally harvested during the past 53 deer-hunting seasons in Indiana (Fig. 1).

The early archery season harvest of 20,511 deer comprised 16.7% of the total harvest and was 2.7% greater than during 2003 (Table 1). Two hundred and twelve of these deer were harvested during the early urban archery season (15-30 September). The late archery season harvest of 1,442 deer comprised 1.2% of the total harvest and was 15.9% greater than during 2003. The combined early and late archery season harvest of 21,953 was 3.5% greater than the 21,208 deer harvested during 2003. Antlerless deer comprised 62% of the total archery harvest, which was a 6-percentage point increase over last year.

The total crossbow harvest for the year, including deer taken on handicapped hunter crossbow permits, was 507 animals compared with 415 for 2003. During the late archery season, the crossbow harvest was 102 deer compared with 67 in 2003 and 59 in 2002.

The firearms season harvest of 84,551 deer was 18.1% greater than during 2003 and comprised 68.7% of the total harvest (Table 1). Antlerless harvest (41,444) increased 19.7% this season, and a record antlered buck harvest (43,107) was 16.6% greater than that of last year (36,961). Antlerless deer comprised 49% of the firearm season harvest, which was a 1-percentage point increase from 2003. About 53% of the total firearms season harvest (36% of the statewide total harvest for all seasons) occurred during opening weekend (Table 2).

The muzzleloader season harvest of 16,554 deer comprised 13.5% of the total harvest and was up 16.7% from 2003 (Table 1). As in past years, a very large percentage (79.6%) of the muzzleloader season harvest was composed of antlerless deer.

Five types of equipment were legal for hunting deer during 2004: bow, shotgun, muzzleloader, handgun, and crossbow. The above equipment types accounted for 17.5, 57.9, 22.9, 1.3, and 0.4% of the total deer harvest respectively (Table 3). Harvests by bow, shotgun, muzzleloader, handgun, and crossbow increased by 3.6, 15.5, 24.0, 13.7, and 22.2, respectively, over those of 2003.

### **Age and Sex Structure**

The age and sex structure of the 2004 deer harvest was 44.5% adult males (antlered bucks), 33.9% adult females, 10.2% male fawns (button bucks), and 11.4% female fawns (Table 4). About 50% of the antlered bucks and 37% of the adult does harvested during 2004 were yearlings (1.5 years old).

### **Harvest Distribution**

The number of deer harvested in individual counties ranged from 65 to 3,353 (Table 5). Harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 58 counties and 2,000 deer in 19 of those 58 counties. For the first time in 8 years, the harvest exceeded 3,000 deer in a county; both Stueben and Switzerland counties harvested more than 3,000 deer. The antlered buck harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 10 counties vs. 5 in 2003, while the antlerless harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 23 counties vs. 16 counties in 2003. Antlerless deer comprised at least 50% of the total harvest in 75 of the state's 92 counties in 2004 vs. 67 counties in 2002.

### **Harvest by License Type**

Licensed resident hunters accounted for 82.5% of the total deer harvest. Licensed non-resident hunters harvested 1.8% of the total harvest. Hunters with a regular yearly deer-hunting permit took only 46% of the total harvest; hunters not paying the full yearly price (i.e., lifetime license holders, youth license holders, landowners, and military personnel) took 54% of the total harvest. Landowners and lessees who hunted on their own land without a license and military personnel on official leave status accounted for 15.7% of the total deer harvest. Of the deer harvested by license-exempt hunters, 98.5% were taken by landowners/tenants and 1.5% by military personnel on leave (Table 6).

Table 1. Number of deer harvested in each segment of the 2004 Indiana deer-hunting season. Change compared to 2003 is shown in parentheses.

Season	Number of Deer Harvested					
	Antlered		Antlerless		Total	
Early Archery (1 Oct.-28 Nov)	7,985	(-12.1)	12,526	(15.1)	20,511	(2.7)
Firearms (13-28 Nov)	43,107	(16.6)	41,444	(19.7)	84,551	(18.1)
Muzzleloader (4-9 Dec)	3,381	(4.3)	13,173	(20.4)	16,554	(16.7)
Late Archery (4 Dec-2 Jan)	295	(20.1)	1,147	(14.9)	1,442	(15.9)
Totals	54,768	(10.6)	68,290	(18.9)	123,058	(15.0)

Table 2. Number of deer harvested on each day of the 2003 Indiana firearms season (includes deer taken by shotgun, muzzleloader, and handgun; does not include deer taken by bow or crossbow).

Date	Day	Antlered		Antlerless		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
13 November	Sat	17,473	59	12,385	41	29,858	35
14 November	Sun	7,515	54	6,523	46	14,039	17
15 November	Mon	2,253	54	1,952	46	4,205	5
16 November	Tue	1,511	55	1,217	45	2,727	3
17 November	Wed	1,145	53	1,025	47	2,170	3
18 November	Thu	1,015	56	812	44	1,827	2
19 November	Fri	930	53	835	47	1,766	2
20 November	Sat	2,826	49	2,970	51	5,796	7
21 November	Sun	2,020	47	2,305	53	4,325	5
22 November	Mon	576	44	724	56	1,299	2
23 November	Tue	531	43	696	57	1,227	1
24 November	Wed	280	39	446	61	726	1
25 November	Thu	1,340	41	1,912	59	3,252	4
26 November	Fri	1,587	34	3,076	66	4,663	6
27 November	Sat	753	31	1,651	69	2,404	3
28 November	Sun.	1,354	32	2,912	68	4,265	5
Totals		43,109		41,441		84,550	

Table 3. Number of deer harvested by type of legal hunting equipment during the 2000-2004 deer-hunting season. Approximate percent of total harvest shown parenthetically.

Equipment Type	Yearly Harvests				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Bow	22,131 (22)	23,765 (23)	18,911 (18)	20,748 (19)	21,498 (18)
Shotgun	59,994 (61)	59,688 (58)	63,794 (61)	61,674 (58)	71,251 (58)
Muzzleloader	14,704 (15)	17,738 (17)	19,711 (19)	22,724 (21)	28,182 (23)
Handgun	1,615 (2)	1,562 (2)	1,625 (2)	1,425 (1)	1,620 (1)
Crossbow					
Handicap	227 (0)	390 (0)	328 (0)	348 (0)	405 (0)
Late Archery	54 (0)	20 (0)	59 (0)	67 (0)	102 (0)
Totals	98,725	103,163	104,428	106,986	123,058

\* Values within this table do not equal those tallied by season (Table 1) because multiple equipment types can be used during the firearm season.

Table 4. Sex and age structure of the Indiana deer harvest during 1987-2004, as determined from mandatory check stations

Year	Adults				Fawns				Total	(%)
	Males	(%)	Females*	(%)	Males	(%)	Females*	(%)		
1987	29,530	(57)	11,139	(21)	6,164	(12)	4,945	(10)	51,778	(100)
1988	34,358	(57)	13,170	(21)	7,050	(12)	5,656	(9)	60,234	(100)
1989	40,503	(51)	19,464	(24)	10,737	(14)	8,614	(11)	79,318	(100)
1990	43,080	(48)	23,680	(27)	12,373	(14)	9,630	(11)	88,763	(100)
1991	41,593	(42)	31,211	(32)	14,626	(15)	11,253	(11)	98,683	(100)
1992	43,508	(46)	25,387	(27)	14,262	(15)	12,157	(13)	95,314	(100)
1993	44,424	(44)	27,704	(27)	14,751	(15)	14,335	(14)	101,214	(100)
1994	50,812	(45)	32,466	(29)	15,487	(14)	13,651	(12)	112,416	(100)
1995	47,098	(40)	40,946	(35)	16,398	(14)	13,287	(11)	117,729	(100)
1996	47,315	(38)	39,913	(32)	17,307	(14)	18,551	(15)	123,086	(100)
1997	42,537	(41)	35,163	(34)	14,039	(13)	13,198	(12)	104,937	(100)
1998	44,955	(45)	30,711	(31)	12,257	(12)	12,538	(12)	100,461	(100)
1999	46,371	(46)	30,474	(31)	11,645	(12)	11,129	(11)	99,619	(100)
2000	44,621	(45)	31,986	(32)	11,072	(11)	11,046	(11)	98,725	(100)
2001	48,357	(47)	31,806	(31)	11,230	(11)	11,770	(11)	103,163	(100)
2002	47,177	(45)	35,357	(34)	11,291	(11)	10,603	(10)	104,428	(100)
2003	49,533	(46)	36,303	(34)	10,262	(10)	10,887	(10)	106,985	(100)
2004	54,743	(44)	41,749	(34)	12,501	(10)	14,065	(11)	123,058	(100)

\*Number of adult and fawn females is projected from the percentage of females aged as fawns at biological check stations, not from the ratio of fawn does to fawn bucks in the total deer harvest.

Table 5. Number of deer harvested in each Indiana county during 2004 (after adjustment for unknowns).

County	No. Harvested			County	No. Harvested		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total*		Antlered	Antlerless	Total*
Adams	216	267	484	Lawrence	898	1,052	1,950
Allen	640	673	1,313	Madison	216	336	553
Bartholomew	502	507	1,009	Marion	129	121	251
Benton	87	59	147	Marshall	969	1,336	2,305
Blackford	140	205	345	Martin	798	981	1,779
Boone	158	158	316	Miami	525	588	1,114
Brown	884	954	1,837	Monroe	729	894	1,623
Carroll	364	445	809	Montgomery	511	574	1,086
Cass	574	656	1,230	Morgan	599	852	1,451
Clark	826	1,102	1,928	Newton	489	444	933
Clay	600	847	1,447	Noble	1,103	1,325	2,428
Clinton	146	165	311	Ohio	516	722	1,238
Crawford	916	845	1,761	Orange	966	1,566	2,532
Daviess	591	847	1,438	Owen	816	714	1,530
Dearborn	1,109	1,689	2,798	Parke	1,175	1,766	2,942
Decatur	268	164	432	Perry	933	1,083	2,016
Dekalb	867	932	1,798	Pike	872	1,135	2,007
Delaware	259	356	614	Porter	360	558	918
Dubois	761	1,116	1,877	Posey	715	633	1,348
Elkhart	584	638	1,222	Pulaski	578	591	1,169
Fayette	299	381	680	Putnam	950	1,143	2,093
Floyd	250	314	564	Randolph	223	309	532
Fountain	632	810	1,442	Ripley	756	1,030	1,786
Franklin	1,110	1,887	2,997	Rush	163	132	295
Fulton	606	762	1,368	SaintJoseph	462	479	941
Gibson	668	674	1,342	Scott	419	541	959
Grant	312	358	669	Shelby	188	181	368
Greene	1,086	1,265	2,351	Spencer	738	933	1,671
Hamilton	183	179	361	Starke	568	574	1,142
Hancock	134	128	262	Steuben	1,420	1,664	3,083
Harrison	1,079	1,463	2,541	Sullivan	929	730	1,660
Hendricks	284	221	506	Switzerland	1,317	2,036	3,353
Henry	241	357	598	Tippecanoe	589	733	1,322
Howard	163	193	356	Tipton	50	15	65
Huntington	472	616	1,089	Union	250	262	513
Jackson	899	1,592	2,491	Vanderburgh	325	437	762
Jasper	558	611	1,169	Vermillion	505	558	1,064
Jay	359	595	954	Vigo	661	782	1,443
Jefferson	860	1,348	2,208	Wabash	594	803	1,397
Jennings	752	992	1,744	Warren	466	580	1,046
Johnson	290	343	632	Warrick	788	749	1,537
Knox	481	477	958	Washington	1,156	1,478	2,634
Kosciusko	1,099	1,438	2,536	Wayne	399	443	842
Lagrange	906	1,743	2,649	Wells	246	212	458
Lake	574	549	1,123	White	398	405	803
Laporte	904	1,242	2,145	Whitley	596	673	1,268

\*Totals may be off +/- 1 due to rounding during partitioning of harvested deer of unknown sex or county.



Table 6. Distribution of the 2004 deer harvest by type of hunter.

Type of Hunter	Harvest	% of Total Harvest
Lifetime Resident	36,066	29.3
Regular Resident	54,316	44.1
Landowner/Tenant	19,099	15.5
Youth	11,123	9.0
Non-resident	2,165	1.8
Military Personnel	289	0.2
Total	123,058	100.0

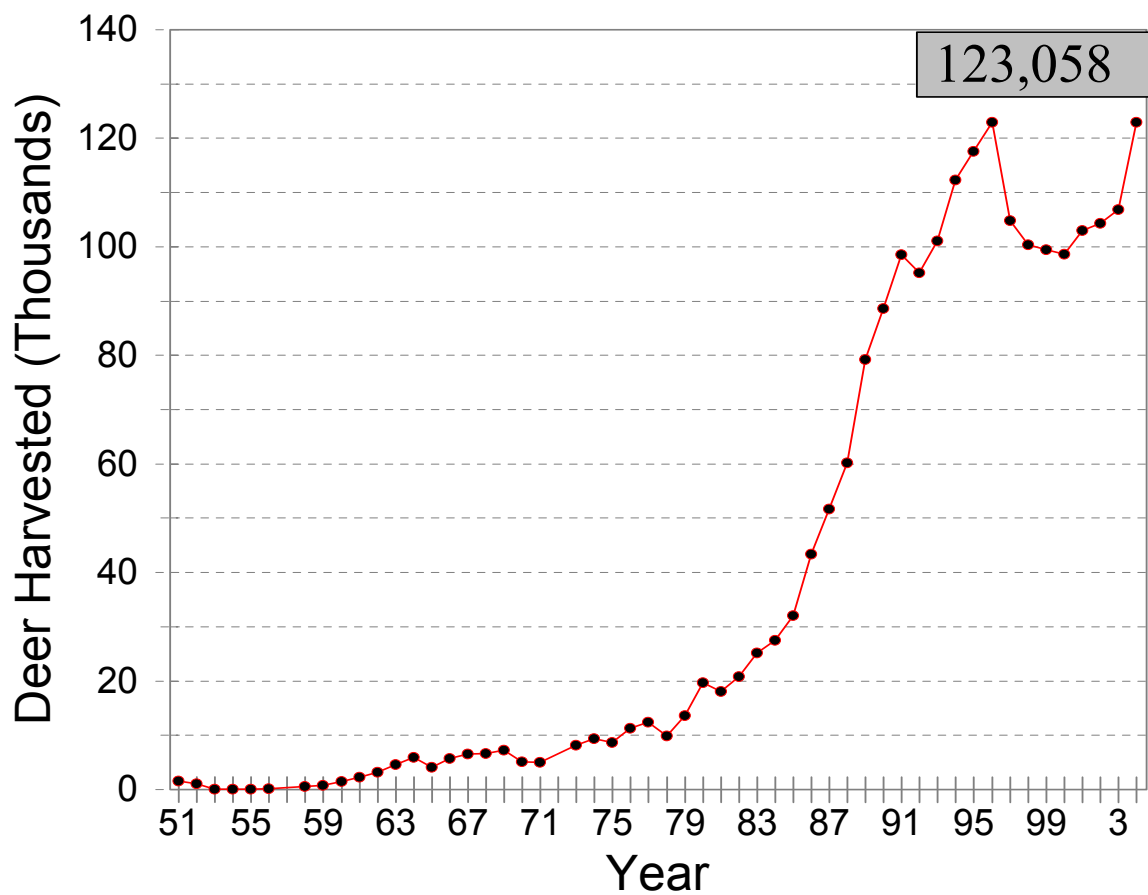


Fig. 1. The number of deer legally harvested during Indiana deer-hunting seasons, 1951-2004.